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detract from the merit of a very scholarly piece of work. It is one of the ripples started by the stone of learning which the Nestor of Jewish studies, Dr. Steinschneider, cast into the sea of the Middle Ages.

NORMAN BENTWICH.

### DR. HIRSCHFELD'S TRANSLATION OF THE *KHAZARI*.

*Judah Hallevi's Kitab al Khazari*, translated from the Arabic, with an Introduction by HARTWIG HIRSCHFELD, Ph.D. [London, George Routledge & Sons, 1905. Pp. 313.]

TWENTY-ONE years have elapsed since Dr. Hirschfeld translated Judah Hallevi's *Kitab al Khazari* into German, and the learned translator could scarcely have celebrated its coming of age more appropriately than by issuing this English version. Dr. Hirschfeld has also edited the text of the Arabic original, and Judah b. Tabbon's Hebrew version. What better qualifications could one desire, or what better guarantee of accuracy? Dr. Hirschfeld has also more than enough enthusiasm for the book and its author to ensure that sympathetic attitude which is so indispensable in a translator. In some respects one is inclined to complain that Dr. Hirschfeld has too much admiration for the *Kitab al Khazari*, and rates it above its merits. Still, such an attitude, though it may diminish the value of the Introduction, can only help to ensure a reliable rendering of the text. The Introduction has its good points too, and the Notes and Indices are very helpful. Altogether this is a welcome addition to our all too few English translations of Jewish classics.

The anti-philosophical tone of the Introduction betrays the undue influence of Hallevi. It may be that Dr. Hirschfeld only intended to voice Hallevi's feelings. In any case the statement that "the Jewish religion is, by its nature, opposed to philosophic pursuits," is a generalization as unwarranted as it is sweeping. Hebrew genius, it is true, is mostly synthetical rather than analytical, intuitive rather than discursive, and therefore poetical rather than scientific, and religious rather than philosophical. But these antitheses are by no means really hostile or incompatible opposites: the great scientist or philosopher needs the gifts of intuition and constructive imagination as well as the power of analysis and critical acumen; and the true poet or seer needs the power of analysis and critical acumen as well as the gift of intuition and the constructive imagination

of prophetic vision. The antitheses merely indicate predominant tendencies—no more. Not to be remarkably philosophical is one thing; to be opposed to philosophy is another and very different thing. It is unwise to make it appear as though Jewish philosophers were any the less Jewish for being philosophers. It was such an attitude which, in the past, prompted obscurantists to denounce thinkers like Maimonides, Spinoza, and Mendelssohn, and which, even now, tends to estrange some of our intellectuals. And it is as unwarranted as it is unwise. Does not the Bible itself contain much that is philosophical? Witness for instance the cosmogony on its very first page, the arguments from design in the Psalms and Prophets, the scepticism of Ecclesiastes, the remarkable speculation in Psalm xciv. 9, and the whole of Job as one of the earliest and most striking attempts at a theodicy. Nor may one ignore the whole array of Jewish philosophers from Philo to Mendelssohn. We rightly claim their thought, and they have a claim on our attention. Jewish philosophers have rendered no mean services to Judaism in the past, and they are destined to render still greater services in the future. In the past they have helped in the periodical re-thinking of Judaism, in making smooth the inevitable transitions from the spirit of one age to the spirit of succeeding ages, in conciliating Jews of different periods at once with the spirit of ancient Judea and with the atmosphere of their new environment. They have helped to keep Judaism alive by keeping it intellectually on the move, and thus saved it from that stagnation which might have made it appear, to the modern thinker, a lifeless fossil out of all vital relation with the living present—like the Judaism that is portrayed in the *Khazari*. For, sooth to say, the *Khazari* is hopelessly out of date, much more so than is the *Guide* of Maimonides. For the spirit of the *Guide* is essentially modern, though its substance and method belong, like the *Khazari*, to the past. Maimonides, unlike Hallevi, had faith in the powers of human reason. If creation *ex nihilo* could be shown to be unreasonable he would not hesitate to re-interpret the words of the Bible so as to reconcile them with the requirements of reason. Now such “interpretation” is a method that must be resorted to no more—though it was natural enough or even inevitable so long as the idea of evolution and the right methods of historical and literary criticism had not yet gained recognition. But the general attitude of Maimonides, his implicit trust in the guiding light of reason, is essentially modern, and increasingly recognized as the only possible one. Modern views of the Bible have put an end to the old method of “interpretation”; but in its place we have something incomparably truer and better—an insight into the his-

torical development of Judaism. True, it may be said that evolution is not evaluation. But they are not altogether unconnected: natural selection offers hints here as elsewhere. This suggests the kind of work that will have to be done by Jewish philosophers, of whom Judaism now stands in need as much as ever, perhaps more than ever. It is no longer a question of reconciling the letter of the Bible with secular philosophies by ingenious interpretation. What we require is a deeper insight into the main tendency of Jewish inspiration, so that we may consciously strive for the advancement of our natural evolution. No doubt we can, and mostly do, develop our destiny even unconsciously. *Fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt*. But surely our progress would gain in pace and in joyousness if made consciously. No! Judaism is not and cannot be opposed to philosophy, or even divorced from it. If religion saves humanity from degradation, philosophy saves religion from superstition. If philosophy has its pitfalls, religion has them too. And the disciplined thinker is not more likely to fall into them than he who openly professes distrust in human reason—a distrust, moreover, which mostly extends only to other people's reason. The very fact that Judaism has shown such persistent disinclination from official articles of faith may be taken as evidence of its instinctive aversion to anything that might prove hostile to independent philosophic inquiry.

Turning from the Introduction to the translation, attention may be drawn to a few slips which can easily be corrected in a future edition. First we may note a few reminiscences of the German translation, such as the reference to "footnotes" on p. 23, and the occurrence of such Germanisms as "Aristotelism," "moon sphere," &c. There are printers' errors on pp. 3, 6, 61, 76 ("solicitude" for "solitude"), p. 85 ("no" for "an"), pp. 112, 127 ("is" omitted), p. 157 ("he" omitted), p. 163 ("of" superfluous), pp. 170, 225 ("not" wrong), p. 227 ("dispersed" for "despised"), p. 285 (superfluous "that"). Then there are a number of more or less inexact expressions causing occasional obscurity—"in abstracto" and "practical" for "*in potentia*" and "actual" (p. 37); "the changes of ordinary" for "deviations from the usual" (p. 54); "syllogism" for "*argumentum a fortiori*" (p. 98); "species and divisibility" for "genus and differentia" (p. 237); "accidences" for "accidents" (p. 251); "avidity" and "dislike" for "desire" and "aversion" (p. 262); "corollary" for "argument" (p. 263); "accidence" for "accident" or *accidens*, "contrast" for "opposite" or "counteracting cause" (p. 277); "casualties" for "causes" (p. 281); also such expressions as "afflatus" for "inspiration," and "allocution" for "speech," and "be then" for "then become" (p. 60 f.). An occasional para-

phrase would have prevented such obscure sentences as this: "The circumstance that it [i. e. every created object] is encompassed by a specific time, irrespective of the period, renders a specificator necessary." In this and similar passages a reference to Dr. Hirschfeld's German translation makes the meaning clear. In fact the German version reads much better than the English version. Dr. Hirschfeld has been excessively scrupulous in refraining from fully availing himself of the translator's right to paraphrase where word-for-word translation may be awkward or obscure. However, though the revision might have been much more fortunate, the slips are not very serious, and the book is welcome as it is.

A. WOLF.

### DR. BÄCK'S "JUDAISM."

*Das Wesen des Judentums*, von Dr. LEO BÄCK, Rabbiner in Oppeln. Berlin (L. Lamm), 1905. Pp. 167.

THIS is one of the first volumes issued under the auspices of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The title and substance of the book were no doubt suggested by Professor Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums*. The comparison which it inevitably invites is very exacting, but it stands the test fairly well.

As the title already suggests, the book is meant to be an exposition of the essence of Judaism. It does not pay much attention to the details of Jewish thought or practice, but presents us rather with what may briefly, and not altogether inaptly, be described as Prolegomena to Judaism. Within a very moderate compass we have an able characterization of Judaism, an interesting and warm exposition of its leading ideas and peculiarities. The book is divided into three parts devoted respectively to the consideration of the Character, the Ideas, and the Conservation of Judaism.

A book of this kind is peculiarly exposed to adverse criticism. It may contain too little to satisfy the conservatives, and yet too much to satisfy the liberals. Judaism, as our author rightly insists, is essentially a religion with a history. It did not come forth complete all at once out of the head of Zeus: it was of slow birth and gradual growth; it is still growing, and shall continue to grow as long as it has life. Now growth, be it never so continuous, involves change; and Judaism has known many changes. Hence a really accurate account of Judaism can only be found in a complete history of Judaism. But then as a history of conflicting, as well as merely growing, elements, it must lack that systematic, harmonious unity